

Strengthening Child Protective Information Systems

On April 1, 2010, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) issued a report titled “Family and Children’s Index Replacement System Analysis and Recommendations”, which included several recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

But our work is far from done. The CEO’s report made it clear legislative changes are needed to further strengthen our ability to protect children through accessible data. Some of those changes are part of AB2322 (Feuer, Bass). The CEO’s report also made reference to 11 other systems utilized in other jurisdictions across the nation – from Alameda County to Allegheny County and from Nevada and Nebraska to New York -- that address different approaches to the effective and efficient collection of data relative to children’s safety and well-being. The LA County Commission on Children and Families’ ongoing work on the Child Health and Education Electronic Record (CHEER) provides another example on how legal and other challenges can be addressed while still forcefully pursuing information systems reform.

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MOTION

RIDLEY-THOMAS	_____
YAROSLAVSKY	_____
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Los Angeles County employees (from case workers and law enforcement officers to their supervisors and department heads) must be held accountable for the well-being of children in County care. But in order to meet that responsibility it must have every piece of available information to get children in its custody and under its jurisdiction out of dangerous situations before it is too late. The effectiveness of the FCI system will now become more apparent as employees in seven Los Angeles County departments have been recently trained and DCFS leadership demands more use of the system. In fact, I am encouraged by the significantly increased usage of the system in the past 2 years as well as the enhancements put in place. Yet I believe we must still continue to challenge the County to do everything possible to make FCI even more effective.

THEREFORE, I MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:

1. Instruct the CEO, in consultation with the CIO, County Counsel, and other County departments currently exploring information sharing initiatives to:
 - a. examine other interagency information sharing systems nationwide, and determine what if any best practices could legally be integrated into the FCI system including cost, and report back in 60 days.
 - b. track and report back preliminarily in ~~six~~ twelve months with a final report in twelve months of the overall efficacy of FCI, including the following issues:

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- i. quality of information, including assessment of FCI import barriers
- ii. level of usage by County staff
- iii ability of the leadership in Los Angeles County departments which participate in FCI to ensure usage compliance, as well as timely response to inquiries initiated as a result of searches in FCI which revealed prior contact(s) by various County departments.

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